

III. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user, said device comprising:

a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the general direction of the arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm;

an attachment post, having a first longitudinal axis, constructed, at said forward end, for attachment to a tool or appliance;

a grip fixed to said attachment post and extending rearward therefrom, said grip having a second longitudinal axis extending transverse to said first axis;

a substantially ~~planar~~flat, seat portion fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom in a plane transverse to said second axis, said seat portion having a ~~convex~~raised contour from forward to rearward, facing the arm; and

a brace constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of the user, said brace fixed to said seat and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said brace and said seat provide a series of individual supporting surfaces—surface portions for exerting a force on bearing against the arm along the extent of the brace in response to movement of the arm within the brace, said arm

movement being responsive to an external force applied to the brace in any direction~~about the arm~~, and wherein ~~said forces, exerted in a particular direction by said individual supporting surfaces~~ surface portions are occur in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace, and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said brace and said seat.

2. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said open ~~area~~ space circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

3. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said attachment post, said grip, said seat, and said brace are integrally formed as sections of a body.

4-5. (canceled)

6. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said first and second axes intersect in an acute angle.

7. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 6, wherein said second axis and said plane of the seat intersect at an angle which is supplementary to said acute angle.

8. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein ~~the pitch of said helix is~~ constructed with a pitch that decreases from forward to rearward.

9. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein ~~the radius of curvature of the~~ said helix is constructed with a radius of curvature that increases from forward to rearward.

10. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

11. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the arm is circumscribed by the brace on at least three sides.

12. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.

13. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.

14. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said

second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.

15. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said tool or appliance is releasably secured to said attachment post by means of a coupling.

16. (canceled)

17. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 1, wherein said seat is substantially flat from forward to rearward.

18. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces from the hand and wrist of a user to the forearm of the user, said device comprising:

a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm;

an attachment post having a first longitudinal axis, said post constructed, at said forward end, for attachment to a tool or appliance;

a grip fixed to said attachment post and extending rearward therefrom, said grip having a second longitudinal axis extending transverse to said first axis; and

a brace constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of the user, said brace fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said brace provides a series of individual supporting surfaces—surface portions for ~~exerting a force on bearing against~~ the arm along the extent of the brace in response to movement of the arm within the brace, said arm movement being responsive to an external force applied to the brace in any direction—about the arm, and wherein ~~said forces, exerted in a particular direction by~~ said individual supporting ~~surfaces~~ surface portions, ~~are—~~ occur in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said brace.

19. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said open ~~area~~ space circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

20. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said attachment post, said grip, and said brace are integrally formed as sections of a body.

21-22. (canceled)

23. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said first and second axes intersect in an acute angle.

24. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein ~~the pitch of said helix is~~ constructed with a pitch that decreases from forward to rearward.

25. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein ~~the radius of curvature of the~~ said helix is constructed with a radius of curvature that increases from forward to rearward.

26. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

27. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the arm is circumscribed on at least four sides of said arm.

28. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.

29. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.

30. (currently amended) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.

31. (previously presented) A device for distributing forces, according to claim 18, wherein said tool or appliance is releasably secured to said attachment post by means of a coupling.

32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces of a user to the forearm of the user in conjunction with a grip of a hand held tool or appliance, said brace comprising:

a forward end in the general direction of the hand and a rearward end in the direction of the arm, said arm including the wrist and the forearm;

a body constructed substantially in the form of a helix, said helix circumscribing an open space to accommodate the arm of the user, said brace attached to said grip and extending rearward therefrom, and

wherein said body provides a series of individual supporting surfaces— surface portions ~~for exerting a force on bearing~~ against the arm along the extent of the brace in response to

movement of the arm within the brace, said arm movement being responsive to an external force applied to the brace in any direction~~about the arm~~, and wherein ~~said forces, exerted in a particular direction by~~ said individual supporting ~~surfaces,~~ surface portions occur~~are~~ in separate, parallel planes, oriented substantially transverse to a longitudinal axis of the brace and said transverse, parallel planes are displaced longitudinally on said helix.

34. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, further comprising a substantially ~~planar~~ flat, seat portion fixed to said grip and extending rearward therefrom in a plane transverse to ~~said second axis~~ the grip, said seat portion having a ~~convex~~ raised contour from forward to rearward, facing the arm, and integrally formed with said body, and extending between said grip and said body.

35. (previously presented) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 34, wherein said brace and seat are integrally formed with said grip.

36. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein said open ~~area~~ space circumscribed by said brace has a conical shape.

37. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein ~~the pitch of~~ said helix is constructed with a pitch that decreases from forward to rearward.

38. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein ~~the radius of curvature of the~~

said helix is constructed with a radius of curvature that
increases from forward to rearward.

39. (previously presented) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is constructed with a substantially straight portion at its distal end to provide additional space for insertion of the arm into said conical space.

40. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis.

41. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said second axis and transverse thereto.

42-43. (canceled)

44. (currently amended) A brace for distributing forces, according to claim 33, wherein said brace is oriented ~~with respect to the other elements of~~ within the device so that the wrist is free to flex to allow the hand to twist on said grip about said second axis and to flex about a third axis displaced rearward of said ~~second axis~~ grip and transverse thereto, said flexing operating to lock the wrist and forearm into engagement with the brace to distribute forces away from the wrist.